The 4th meeting of the Eastern Partnership Integrated Border Management Panel (Vilnius, 31 March 2011)

The fourth meeting of the Eastern Partnership Integrated Border Management (EaP IBM) panel took place in Vilnius on 31 March 2011. The panel was created under the EaP platform 1 "Democracy, Good Governance and Stability" and met for the first time in Odessa, Ukraine in October 2009. Other meetings took place in Brussels on 28 June 2010, and Chisinau on 17 November 2010.

The EaP IBM panel aims to facilitate the exchange of best practices on IBM and to promote the development of the EaP IBM Flagship Initiative. This Flagship Initiative includes training for customs officers and border guards and the provision of border surveillance equipment and infrastructure, with a budget of €44 million. Specific EaP IBM training seminars have already taken place in Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Ukraine in the course of 2010. Effective border management is one of the preconditions for improved mobility of people between the EU and the Eastern partners.

The Vilnius meeting was attended by representatives of all six Eastern partners, of the EU and of its Member States, as well as of international organisations the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OSCE) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The meeting allowed participants to share their experience on various aspects of border management and was followed by a field trip to Salcininkai on the Lithuanian-Belarus border, where participants could learn first-hand about Lithuanian border management practice. It also kicked off the €2 million EaP IBM Flagship Initiative Training Project, implemented by the ICMPD.

The EaP IBM Flagship Initiative Training Project provides training to customs officers and border guards of the Eastern partners in five main areas:
1. Design and implementation of IBM strategies and action plans
2. Document integrity and security, detection of forgeries and imposter recognition
3. Risk analysis for customs officers and border guards
4. Detection of smuggled goods
5. Protection of intellectual property rights.

The project also deals with the fight against corruption as a horizontal component across the five areas. Furthermore, the ICMPD is to carry out a Border Client Satisfaction Survey with the help of the EaP Civil Society Forum, to measure the level of public satisfaction with the operation of border controls in the Eastern Partnership area and to help gauge the improvement of border management practices in this area.